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Washburn College	Kansas
Wessington Springs Junior College	Pennsylvania
Wagner Memorial Lutheran College	New York
West Virginia Wesleyan College	West Virginia
Western College for Women	Ohio
Western Maryland College	Maryland
Wittenberg College	Ohio
Wheaton College	Massachusetts
Wesley College	North Dakota
Waldorf College	Iowa
Willamette University	Oregon
Wolford College	South Carolina
Wellesley College	Massachusetts
Westminster College	Texas
Walla Walla College	Washington
Wabash College	Indiana
Wartburg College	Iowa
*Yale University	Connecticut
York College	Nebraska

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### **MEMORIAL ON BIBLE AS A COLLEGE ENTRANCE CREDIT**

Adopted by the Departments of Universities and Colleges and Teachers of Bible in Colleges and Universities, in joint session of the Religious Education Association Convention, Rochester, N. Y., March 11, 1921, to be presented to college and university authorities jointly by the Council of Church Boards of Education and the Religious Education Association.

We hold that the Bible contributes essentially to the ends of higher education, which has for its main objective the making of the best type of world citizenship.

1. The Bible is the depository of the finest ideals of life. It joins ethics with religion, and defines religion in social terms.

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\*Half unit credit.

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God and thy neighbor as thyself" is both Old and New Testament teachings. "Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them" is the golden rule of conduct.

2. The Bible is the finest specimen of English literature. Sentiment and literary expression go hand in hand. It says great things, and says them in a noble, clear and impressive way. These two outstanding qualities give the Bible pre-eminence of values in education.

There is to be recorded a gratifying growth in the appreciation of the educational value of Bible study. It is seen in the increasing recognition the study is obtaining in the college curriculum and in the steady growth of "Grade A," speaking of better equipment in man power and material, according to the report of the Committee on the Standardization of Colleges, presented to this convention by the chairman, Prof. Irving F. Wood, of Smith College.

The time has now come for the taking of a forward step in urging that credits in Bible study be more generally allowed for college entrance. There are three reasons for such action.

(a) It calls attention to the importance of systematic Bible study in the secondary schools, the Church Bible School, the Association schools, etc.

(b) It tends to increase the efficiency of Bible study in these outside agencies, by bringing it under academic control, and by insisting upon high grade of work.

(c) It stimulates the systematic study of the Bible by offering of academic reward.

We, therefore, recommend that the report of the Joint Commission appointed by the Council of Church Boards of Education be adopted by all our American colleges, and be made the basis for a college entrance elective.

That the College Entrance Board be requested to prepare and offer examinations (based on the recommendations of the Commission) beginning June, 1921.

That the secondary schools be requested to provide an adequate staff and equipment for the teaching of the Biblical courses outlined by the Commission.

### **THE STUDENTS' VIEWPOINT ON BIBLE CREDIT**

BY DEAN CONRAD VANDERVELDE, THE COLLEGE OF EMPORIA

For many years, especially since "farming out" college Bible teaching to the members of the faculty ceased, and endowed chairs and regular Bible teachers became more numerous, the subject of the transfer of college Bible credit to our secular universities has been discussed. In the recent years the instruction in Bible has developed from a mere formal affair, with all classes grouped together on a one-hour-a-week schedule, to two or three-hour-a-week courses, graded and arranged for the classes according to some sequence.

Students transferring before the completion of their college course to professional schools or to secular universities with advanced standing, have raised the question as to why any discrimination should be made against the Bible work. Sometimes their experience in Bible work furnished a satisfactory answer to their question, but occasionally, at least, they could not see the reason for any discrimination against a course which to them had educational value equal or superior to other courses which were accepted. This pressure from students and the desire on the part of administrators of denominational colleges which required Bible of all students to be able to say "all credit is transferable," have kept before the academic leaders and Bible teachers the question of the possibility and the advisability of full recognition of Bible work in colleges.

In the State of Kansas this question was raised four years ago by a communication from the dean of the University of Kansas addressed to the authorities in the denominational colleges relative to standardizing the Bible credit and instruction so as to make possible an easy determination of accreditable Bible study work. Since then a group of Kansas denominational college men, known as the Council of Church Colleges in Kansas, has been interested in securing recognition of Bible credit by the University.

As an occasional teacher of Bible in colleges, the author of this investigation has been interested in the success of these efforts. From the administrative point of view the question of actual educational value of Bible study in our colleges, to say nothing of the religious value of the work, has been persistent. It has seemed as though the educational value of the courses

should determine for the greater part the question of accrediting these courses in the universities and graduate schools. For this reason it seems that, when the educative value of these courses is established as taught in any institution, credit should be granted. Until this value is established it is hardly "Christian" to ask that credit be given.

With this in mind and with a curiosity to know the facts, a questionnaire was prepared and sent to the registrars of the colleges of Kansas for the purpose of obtaining information as to the general estimation placed upon the Bible courses. Uniformly the responses indicated that students took the same attitude toward the Bible courses and regarded them as of equal value with other courses. The registrars seemed to think that the attitude of students would be changed but little, if any, were the credits to be accepted by our state university. My experience, however, with students in several institutions and occasional remarks heard on campuses gave me the impression that the attitude of the students was not the same. In fact, apriori reasoning led me to this conclusion also. I, therefore, made plans to get back directly to student opinion.

If Bible work is not accreditable educationally (where moral and spiritual values cannot be considered) it must be due to the lack of work and effort on the part of the student, an unimportant or inadequate content, or a wrong method of approach and instruction on the part of the instructor. The following questionnaire was prepared to cover these points, and sent to representative students in 89 American colleges:

"Your selection to the position you occupy in the student life of your institution gives me the assurance that you are in a position to give our colleges valuable assistance in a vital problem of administration. Your contacts with students and your knowledge of student sentiment fits you to give accurate judgment on the questions asked below. Will you not give your frank judgment on the questions asked?"

"The data gathered by this questionnaire will be kept entirely confidential so far as the identity of colleges and individuals is concerned. The summaries of replies only will be published without names of individuals or colleges reporting. If you desire to know the results of the questionnaire I shall be glad to put you in touch with the article as soon as it is prepared and published. Kindly indicate this on your reply."

What is the general attitude of the students toward the courses in Bible study as compared with their attitude toward the courses in other departments?

1.\* Do they find the Bible courses as exacting as the other courses, or are they generally considered "snaps"?

2.\* Do they find the Bible courses have as much educational value as do other courses in the college, i. e., do they get as much value from the courses in practical help? In new insights? In correct scientific and historical methods? In social and ethical principles?

3.\* Do they have the same confidence in the scientific method and thoroughness of Bible instruction as they have in the average of the other departments?

4.\* Do the instructors have the same standing in the mind of the students as regards their scientific temper and scholarly ability?

5.\* Do you think that the attitude of the students toward Bible courses would be changed were the courses to be recognized by our secular universities and the credit for Bible to become transferable to secular institutions?

Signed.....Official position.....

The questions need no special discussion. It was not the intention of the author of the questionnaire to elicit a reply to the introductory question, though nearly all answered it definitely. Question 1 was intended to show whether the work required and done was adequate for accrediting. Question 2 had special reference to the content and the felt benefits of the work. Questions 3 and 4 implied a distinction which the answers recognized, namely, that some Bible instructors are trained in other departments and are regarded as scientific in their special subject, but when they teach Bible they drift into a "Sunday-schoolish" method and procedure and a medieval mental attitude.

Directing the questionnaire to students implies a judgment on their part which might not be generally recognized. While the judgment of some students on the points covered in the questionnaire or any other questionnaire might be faulty, there is, perhaps, no better way of determining values than through

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\*These numbers were not on the original questionnaire.

the deliberate judgment of selected individuals in our college student body. The persons selected for the questionnaire were the presidents of the Y. M. C. A., the Y. W. C. A., and the Junior Class, and the editor of the college publication. It was thought in this selection to secure a fairly representative sentiment of the two upper classes, and in a general way of the lower classes also. These positions represent a certain superiority among their fellows. These persons also represent different types of students, at least, they are likely to do so. The president of the senior class might have been chosen also, but inasmuch as the editor of the paper or one of the presidents of the Christian Associations is likely to be a senior, it was thought unnecessary to include this class officer. The questionnaire was sent to these four positions in 89 colleges. Forty-eight colleges responded by one or more replies, 71 replies in all: 15 Y. W. C. A. presidents, 24 Y. M. C. A. presidents, 14 Junior Class presidents, and 15 editors. In five cases one official held two of these positions.

STATISTICAL TABLE OF RESPONSES

<i>Question</i>	<i>No Answer</i>	<i>Negative Answer</i>	<i>Positive Answer</i>	<i>Doubtful Reply</i>
Introductory.....	1	24	46	0
1.....	2	16	53	0
2a.....	2	15	54	0
2b.....	5	10	54	2
2c.....	1	12	58	0
2d.....	1	11	59	0
3.....	0	19	50	1
4.....	0	10	58	2
5.....	0	15	54	2

The general attitude toward Bible courses as indicated by the answers to the introductory question is not what it should be. Many of the responses indicate that this is because it is required. "Bible is compulsory, hence sentiment of students reacts against the courses." "Since certain courses are required of Freshmen the rest are considered much as a bottle of medicine after one dose has been required." This response comes from a Y. M. C. A. president, whose other answers are all affirmative.

Other responses show that the fact that the credit is not transferable is a cause of an unfavorable attitude. Twelve of the fifteen negative answers to question 5 are by those who indi-

cate a very favorable attitude to the work in the institutions they represent. Of the twenty-four negative answers to the introductory question almost all said emphatically the attitude would be changed for the better if credit were given for the work. One said: "Ninety nine per cent of the indifference here is due to secular institutions not recognizing the subject." "Students would feel better about putting in their time to gain the credit." The "attitude would change only in that the courses (already popular) would be more popular." However, one reply stated that it would "change the attitude of 50 per cent only," another, "perhaps a little," still another, "not here," indicating in the remaining answers that it was due to the instructors. Other representative responses showing the question of credits is important in the attitude whether favorable or unfavorable are, "Bible makes good credit but small practical value," "many take it for easy credit," "the students prefer to take courses which are recognized by the universities. For this reason many reject the courses in Bible study." Some take it as a matter of course as shown by these: "Since I have to take it," "the same, students take it for granted."

On the other hand a large number give an affirmative answer to the introductory question with some emphasis as the following replies show: "Probably more favorable," "on a par with others," "The Bible courses are popular and fully as exacting," "more students enrolled and more interest taken than in any other," "just as worthwhile as any course," "very favorable," etc. On the whole one gets the impression in reading the answers to the introductory question that there is a close correlation between the negative attitude on the part of the students and the inability to transfer credits. Those colleges in which the attitude is "the same" as other courses believe that "transfer of Bible credit" would make the attitude even more favorable.

On question 1, sixteen "no" and fifty-three "yes" gives a fairly accurate representation of the responses without further comment. However, on this question the four groups of persons responding differ, Junior class presidents giving 4 "no" and 8 "yes," and Y. M. C. A. presidents giving 10 "no" and 17 "yes," leaving editors and Y. W. C. A. presidents practically unanimous in regarding the courses as exacting as other courses. The most significant and most representative responses on this question follow. In most cases the affirmative answer elicited



contained comment at length, while the negative answers were simply "snaps," or "no." "Not 'snaps' by any means, though in general they are not the source of so much worry as courses with which the students are entirely unfamiliar," "among the hardest in college and are *never* snaps," "very exacting here," "our courses are snappy, and good hard work is required," "quite a bit of memory work and made sufficiently hard to be interesting"—these are characteristics of the affirmative answers.

Question 2 has four parts. The second part "new insights" perhaps did not arouse any particular concept in the minds of some, for it failed to receive a reaction in five cases, while the other parts of this question failed in only one or two cases. Very few comments were made on these questions, the space allotted on the questionnaire perhaps influencing the student to give a "yes" or "no" response. Where comments were made they had reference to the instructor and not to the content. An extract from one comment is illuminating. "Most instructors are scandalized at the questions some students ask and the students are honestly trying to clear up doubts and are trying to find themselves. They aren't 'heathen' like some instructors try to intimate." Another says, "all these affirmative answers (are) due to present instructor and methods used. We have had instructors under which directly opposite conditions existed." Still another, in a letter accompanying the blank comments further as follows: "College has two instructors in the Department of Bible, one instructor handling the courses that are compulsory and one the elective courses. The professor teaching the elective courses openly asks that students become honest doubters, but in no wise to disbelieve until they have exhausted a source of information bearing on the subject. This gentleman is accomplishing good results and students profit by and enjoy his courses very much. The other professor, more by attitude than intent, forbids challenging questions. Freshmen and sophomores very often express their distaste for this manner of teaching. Upper-classmen tend to forget this 'mannerism' and strive to glean the knowledge shown by this gentleman's able discourses."

Questions 3 and 4, while similar in some respects, were finely distinguished by the responders. Students seem to think that a scholarly instructor, who is scientific in other particulars,

may be far from it in Bible instruction. This is especially true where the Bible work is "farmed out" to members of the faculty. On many blanks these questions were occasions for remarks about the instructors. I quote some of the most interesting, both favorable and unfavorable. "Every bit as high," "yes, even above most of the professors of other departments" (these in answer to question 4), "considered narrow," "as professors, yes, as men, no," "I think so, but it may be as before next year," "the instructor here is not a very good *teacher*, although he has the biblical knowledge," "free thought or opinion is restricted by established tradition of the department and head of the department," etc. Two extended comments characterize a class of institutions and also student sentiment in these. "The answers \* \* \* do not represent what might be but what is. We had a professor of Bible here two years ago that was free from the objections listed on the other side of the paper. There are two causes for the low standing of our Bible department. One is the policy of the college in using it as a pensioning agent for old, broken, and infirm missionaries and preachers that would be hard pressed financially unless they had the position. That is nice for the professors, but bad for the students. The second cause is the German higher critical position taken by one of our professors which has undermined the faith of many students. His courses \* \* \* are a stumbling block." Another writes with feeling: "It is my belief that the number of good live Bible teachers is very limited. Most instructors are scandalized at the questions some students ask, and the students are honestly trying to clear up doubts and are trying to find themselves. They aren't 'heathen' like some instructors try to intimate. Then, too, many instructors try to make their classes accept their interpretation of the Bible without trying to show why they believe as they do. Bible is a live modern subject, but some teach it as it were a dead 'relic.' "

Question 5 has been commented upon in connection with the introductory question.

#### GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

Were a questionnaire to be sent out investigating any other department of study, e. g., chemistry, I venture to believe that some unfavorable comment about the department, the method, and the instructor would be received. I doubt if there would be

as many enthusiastic comments made as the replies about Bible instructors showed. On the whole the scholarship, the method, the scientific and historical spirit of the instructor of Bible subjects are high. In addition, ethical and spiritual values which some public institutions would not accept as grounds for educational credit are also high in these courses and under these personalities.

Some improvement might be made in the teaching force in this department according to student replies. In some cases the students probably do not realize the educational worth and practical value of the work because they enter upon the courses with a prejudice, owing to the fact that no credit is given for the work in transfer to other institutions. The failure on the part of the student is shown in several responses of which this is typical, "students here are about evenly divided, about half taking it for a 'snap,' and half taking it to receive the most from it possible."

The vital problem in making the Bible department function not as well "as the average," but the best in the institution, is the matter of general recognition of credits. The questionnaire shows that the attitude of the students is due to the attitude of the universities toward Bible credit. A change in the attitude of the universities would have a decidedly beneficial effect upon the student attitude toward college Bible study. A new student attitude would give greater value to their effort in Bible, both directly and indirectly.

This new student attitude, with a Bible department scheduled, equipped, and conducted as other departments are, and headed by a broad minded,—not necessarily radical,—scholarly man with scientific pedagogic method, should make our Bible instruction the instrument for cultivating a Christian spirit, and arousing a fine altruism and idealism in life work choices. The great need, therefore, according to the author's interpretation of the student questionnaire, is for university accrediting of Bible work and a strong man to head the department to make the students unanimous in their judgement of the educational value of the work.